

PATENT**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Applicant has carefully reviewed and considered the Office Action mailed on July 13, 2005, and the reference cited therewith.

No claims are amended, no claims are cancelled, and claims 22 and 23 are added; as a result, claims 1-23 are now pending in this application.

Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 22 and 23 do not introduce any new subject matter and are intended to cover additional claimable subject matter fully supported by the originally filed specification. Support for claims 22 and 23 can be found throughout the specification, including, but not limited to, page 1, paragraph 4, page 2, paragraph 0006; page 3, paragraph 0015; and page 6, paragraph 0040.

Claim Objections

Claim 21 is allowed. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the allowance of claim 21.

Claims 3-13 and 16-20 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for the allowance of claims 3-13 and 16-20.

Applicant has incorporated subject matter indicated by the Examiner to be allowable in connection with dependent claim 3 into new claim 23. Applicant's new claim 23 recites all the subject matter of independent claim 1 and dependent claim 3. As such, Applicant believes independent claim 23 is in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests consideration of the same.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1, 2, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,331,991 to Nilsson.

In the office action dated July 13, 2005, the Examiner cited various portions of the Nilsson reference as describing all the elements and limitations of Applicant's independent claims 1 and 14. Specifically, the Examiner cited reference numeral 10 of the Nilsson reference

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as describing a patient-enclosing air tent mounted on the framework of inflatable tubes, the inflatable tubes being operable, when inflated, to support the air tent above the patient, as recited by Applicant's independent claims 1 and 14.

The Nilsson reference appears to describe a tent unit (reference numeral 10) and an upper structure (11), which is held stretched, or tensioned, with the aid of inflated, arcuate support tubes (12) and guys (13), and a floor structure (14), which is sealed against the upper roof structure (11). (See Col. 1, lines 19-21; Col. 3, lines 2-5; and Figure 1 of the Nilsson reference). The tent unit described by the Nilsson reference protects personnel within the tent unit from gases, lethal bacteria, etc. In other words, the tent unit is capable of housing personnel, medical equipment, etc., in a non-contaminated environment such that personnel are able to carry out their duties without obstruction from personal protective equipment. (See Col. 1, lines 57-67 of the Nilsson reference). Additionally, the upper structure of the tent unit uses a combination of arcuate support tubes, guys, and a floor structure to help tension and stretch the upper structure of the tent unit.

In contrast, Applicant's independent claim 1, recites, besides other things:

a framework of inflatable tubes;
a patient-enclosing air tent mounted on the framework of inflatable tubes, the inflatable tubes being operable, when inflated, to support the air tent above the patient.

And, Applicant's independent claim 14, recites, besides other things:

a framework of inflatable tubes in fluid connection with the pressurized air source;
a patient-enclosing air tent mounted on the framework of inflatable tubes, the inflatable tubes being operable, when inflated, to support the air tent above the patient.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the Nilsson reference does not describe a patient-enclosing air tent mounted on the framework of inflatable tubes, the inflatable tubes being operable, when inflated, to support the air tent above the patient as recited by Applicant's

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independent claims 1 and 14 and supported throughout the Applicant's specification. (See, e.g., page 1, paragraph 0004; page 5, paragraph 0036; and Figures 7 and 9).

As such, each and every limitation of Applicant's independent claims 1 and 14 is not shown by the Nilsson reference. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the §102 rejection of independent claims 1 and 14, as well as those claims which depend therefrom.

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SUMMARY

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to the Deposit Account No. 500-326.

Respectfully submitted,

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